

Statement on the “Weapons Offenses and Offenders” Report

November 11, 1995

These statistics are a chilling reminder to all of us—parents, teachers, police officers and elected leaders—that juvenile violence remains the number one crime problem in America.

I am proud of the landmark legislation we have passed to fight the scourge of youth violence, such as the juvenile handgun ban and zero-tolerance for guns in schools. But if we are to win this fight against crime and violence, more parents must begin to teach their children right from wrong.

And to anyone who would undo the steps I have taken to fight crime and violence in America’s streets and on her schoolyards, I say: Look at the facts. Now is not the time to weaken our laws.

NOTE: This statement was embargoed for release by the Office of the Press Secretary until 5:01 p.m. on November 12.

Statement on the Balkan Peace Process

November 12, 1995

Today’s agreement between the Government of Croatia and the leaders of the local Serbian community on the region of Eastern Slavonia is a major step toward the achievement of an overall peace settlement in the Balkans. This agreement provides for the peaceful reintegration of the region under Croatian sovereignty, following a period of transitional administration by the United Nations.

I congratulate the parties for the wisdom they have shown in entering into this agreement and avoiding renewed conflict. I also congratulate Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who played a direct role in assisting the parties to arrive at this agreement, along with Ambassador Richard Holbrooke and the U.S. and UN mediators, Ambassador Peter Galbraith and Thorvald Stoltenberg.

Remarks on Returning Without Approval Temporary Public Debt Limit Increase Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

November 13, 1995

The President. Good morning. Today I am vetoing H.R. 2586, which the congressional leadership sent to me last night. It would allow the United States to pay its debts for another month but only at a price too high for the American people to pay. Here are the reasons why.

First, the bill actually increases the likelihood of a default on America’s obligations for the first time in our history by taking away from the Secretary of the Treasury the tools he now has to avoid default under extraordinary circumstances.

Second, the bill obligates the Government—Congress and the President—to pass the Republican congressional budget plan with its huge cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, education and technology, the environment, and its tax increases on working families.

Third, the bill implements the Republican congressional proposal to reverse a 30-year bipartisan commitment to environmental protection and public health. It would increase pollution and decrease the purity and safety of our air, water, and food.

This legislation is part of an overall backdoor effort by the congressional Republicans to impose their priorities on our Nation. Here is what is really going on.

Last spring, Speaker Gingrich said he and his new Republican congressional majority would force me, the congressional Democrats, and the American people to accept their budget and their contract by bringing about a crisis in the fall, by shutting down the Government and pushing America into default, unless I accepted their extreme proposals. In this way, the congressional Republicans sought to get around the United States Constitution which gives the President the power to veto measures not in the public interest.

They are now implementing the strategy Speaker Gingrich told us about last spring. And because I refuse to go along with it, they say I am refusing with them to solve these short-term problems.